

13th TRAINING ACADEMY

ON CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

**PÉCS/HU/ & OSIJEK/HR/ | SHAPING CONFIDENCE
2-5 JUNE 2026 | AND DIVERSITY**

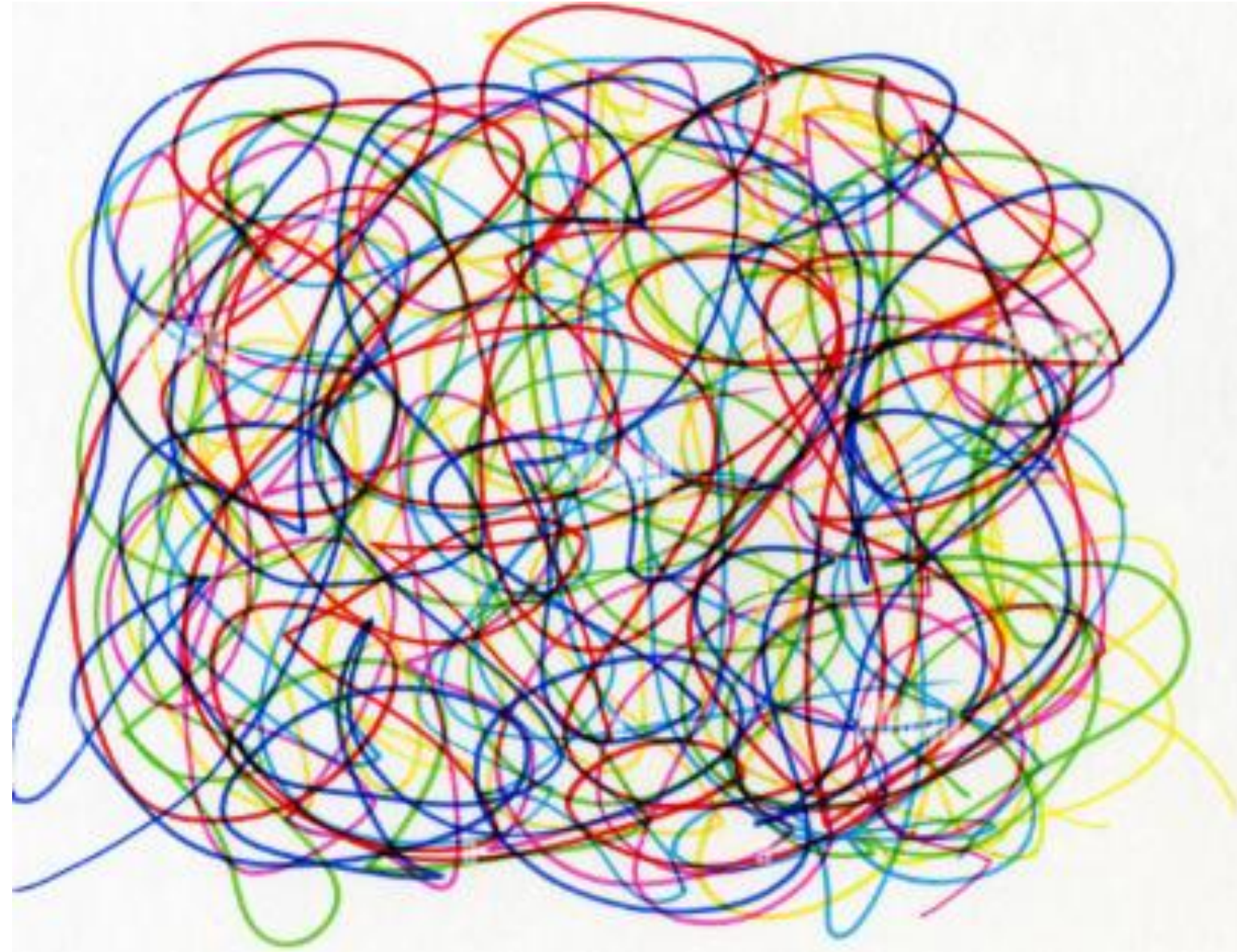


Sustainable tourism practices along Cultural Routes

Sustainable tourism **dialogues** along Cultural Routes

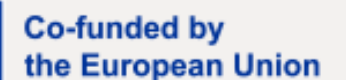
Ivana Jurić, Tourism Board of Osijek-Baranja County
Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route

June 4th 2026



TASK

Reframing Tourism for Cultural Routes



TOURISTS

VISITORS

01 Reframing



TYPE OF REGION?

rural area, “lagging-behind”, mass tourism hub, destination-brand...



Tourism is travel without a **purpose**

Global Tourism Breakdown

Year 	International Arrivals	Key Highlights
1987	~360 million	Travel was largely dominated by traditional Western source markets.
2025	~1.52 billion	Driven by Asia-Pacific recovery, cheaper airfares, and visa facilitation. Europe led the way, recording 793 million arrivals alone.



Redefining tourism from extraction to symbiosis

/ dismantling the stereotype /

	Mass Tourism	Cultural Tourism
Focus	Consumption of places.	Connection with people and stories.
Economic Impact	Wealth leaks to multinational corporations.	Wealth remains within local, rural communities.
Structural Growth	Top-down, forced infrastructure.	Organic, network-driven growth.
The Audience	Passive consumers seeking convenience.	Active participants seeking authenticity.





From Cultural Assets to Market-Ready Products



TOURISM IS A COLLECTION OF
EXPERIENCES AND SERVICES =
A PRODUCT



A PRODUCT = PRICE, TARGET
GROUPS, SALES CHANNELS,
LOGISTICS, MARKET
PLACEMENT, (BUSINESS)
PARTNERS....

Tourism as a set of experiences and services = product = price

- **accommodation** (for large groups, individual guests, different categorization*)
- **catering** services (tradition, gourmet)
- **attractions** (Vasarely gallery - expert guidance, Zsolnay Cultural Quarter, Chocolate (work)shop, Synagogue, ZOO... **one ticket = more experiences** // sea, pyramids, old towns-fortresses, amusement park)
- **accessibility** - transport connections, people with disabilities, cycling and hiking routes
- **events** - community vs. or & tourism-as the motive of arrival
- **communication** - promotion on the market, communication on-site - marking, visual branding of landscape
- **special offer**: wellness, art, creative and culinary workshops, healthy eating courses, "story telling" course,...
- **AUTHENTICITY** - people, culture, customs, food, space, architecture = **stories**
- **people/locals - from producers, experts, guides, agencies, hospitality workers...**
- **interaction and involvement: EXPERIENCE, EMOTION, CONNECTION!**

Concentration of offer is the key!
Tourism grows where there is a concentration of services and products.





CULTURAL TOURISM AS A SET OF EXPERIENCES AND SERVICES = PRODUCT



INTERPRETATION



INTERACTION



ANIMATION





LOISIUM WINEXPERIENCE WINEWELT



EVENTS

Events as one of the tools of symbiosis of culture and tourism: Roman parade in Pecs, Vinalia, Wine&Art in Osijek // **AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT...**

Strong visibility tool, tips&tricks, “free PR”
Experiences, Interaction, Emotions....



#ROMANSWINEDANUBE project

PP11 ACTIVITY TASK: new **LABELS/SUB-BRANDS**

1. Wines from the Danube Region = DANUBE + WINE
2. Festivals of Roman Emperors = WINE + ROMAN HERITAGE



MASTER BRAND:

ROMAN EMPERORS AND DANUBE WINE ROUTE

Main pillars of the Route





EVENT THAT CONNECTS THE **ROMAN EMPERORS** AND DANUBE WINE ROUTE



#RomansWineDanube



Co-funded by
the European Union

BRAND ESSENCE

WINES CARRYING THIS LABEL ARE SINCERE, TRUTHFUL, AUTHENTIC, AND TERROIR-DRIVEN.
They reflect their origin and strong connection to the Danube River, both in terms of terroir and the Roman heritage that culturally unites all the wine regions along the Danube.



PRODUCT THAT CONNECTS THE ROMAN EMPERORS AND **DANUBE WINE** ROUTE



IN VINO DANUBIUS

IN VINO
DANUBIUS

I·N · V·I·N·O
D·A·N·U·B·I·U·S

·IN·VINO·
DANUBIUS

DONAU, DUNAJ, DUNA, DUNAV, DUNĂREA, ДУНАВ, ДУНАЙ

DANUVIUS and DANUBIUS, two Latin words for the River Danube.

The proposed brand name written in Latin language with reference to the *ancient Latin proverb* also **CULTURALLY UNITES** all the wine regions along the Danube course that nowadays use different names for one of the most important European rivers through the heritage one of the most significant world cultures – **Roman civilization**. Brand communicates also the direct link between the centuries old wine tradition along the Danube River and the Roman Empire as its cultural heritage backbone.

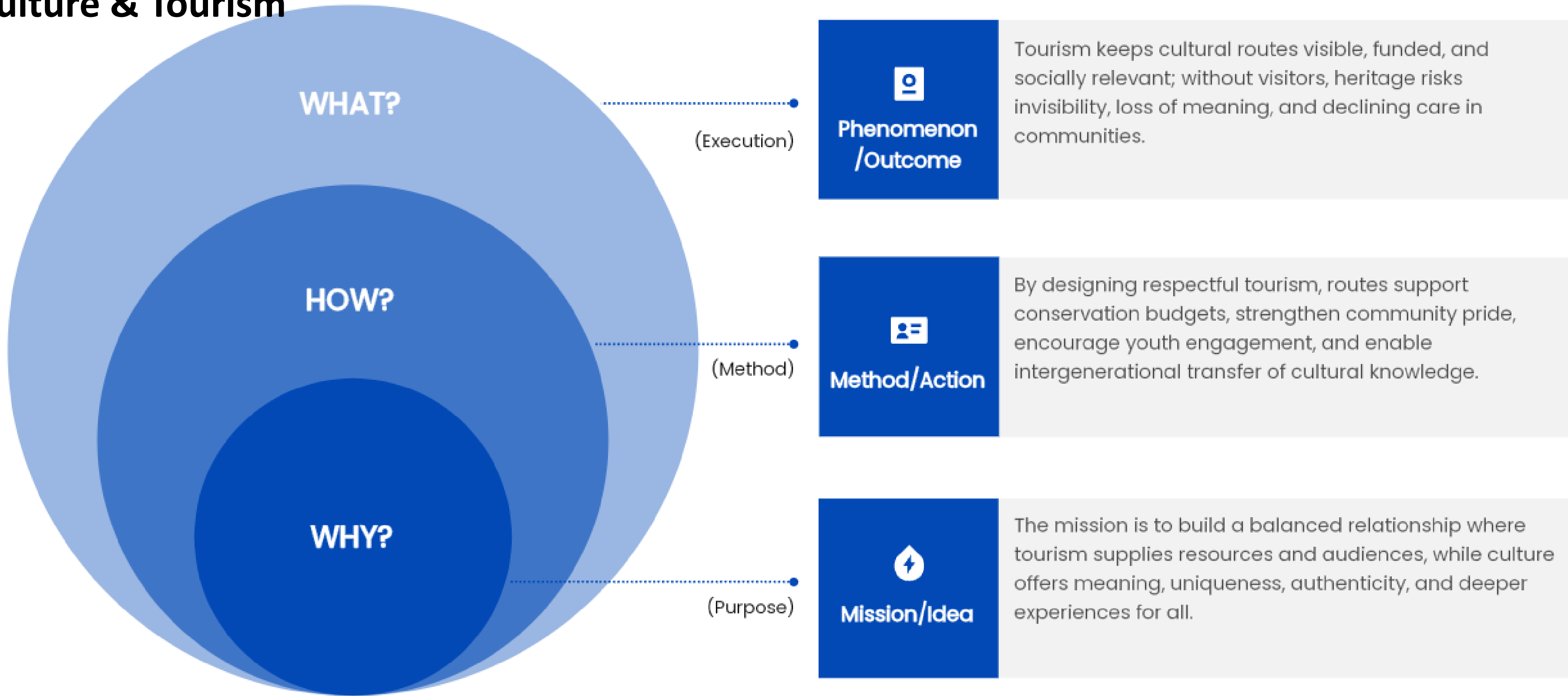
Interreg
Danube Region



Co-funded by
the European Union

#RomansWineDanube

Culture & Tourism



AUTHENTICITY

FINALLY!!



“One day last year, two guests from Germany who had traveled all over Croatia came to our hotel in Osijek. When they arrived, they started shouting “**Finally!! Finally!!**”. Of course, we looked at them with questionnaires, and then they explained to us that in Slavonia there are no restaurants and cafes intended for tourists, but that all the places are actually places where local people stay. This “Finally!” was the delight of finally discovering the real Croatia. **Interaction with the local population** is something that guests really appreciate, and **we take it for granted**. Slavonia is a miracle because it is authentic, not ‘formatted’ for tourists.”

Jasmina Poznić Krkić, Maksimilian, Osijek

CULTURAL ROUTES PROVIDE AUTHENTIC “CONTENT”, HERITAGE, CONTACT WITH THE LOCALS...



The Route as a Network, Not a Line

01

Networks as Engines of Sustainability

Networks multiply resources through shared marketing, joint products, and collective learning. Network-centered thinking underpins sustainable cultural tourism: sustainability flows through relationships and cooperation.

Build your network.

02

Layers of the Cultural Route Network

A cultural route is a living network of people, places, and stories. It combines local actors, regional clusters, full-route coordination, and international partners into interconnected, evolving structures.



Environmental Sustainability Along Routes

Low-Carbon Mobility & Resource Efficiency

Promote walking, cycling, and public transport, while improving energy, water, and waste efficiency in tourism services across routes to minimize environmental footprints and operational impacts.

Ecosystem Protection & Climate Resilience

Protect landscapes, biodiversity, and fragile ecosystems by managing visitor flows, applying zoning and carrying capacity, and integrating climate adaptation and risk management for extreme weather.

Socio-Cultural Sustainability & Heritage

Protecting Traditions and Authenticity

Tourism must reinforce local traditions, safeguard intangible heritage, and avoid superficial cultural performances, ensuring stories remain authentic and respectful of community values and lived experiences.

Inclusion, Participation, and Dialogue

Engage local residents in decisions and heritage interpretation, promote access for youth, elders, disabled people, minorities, and use tourism experiences to challenge stereotypes and encourage intercultural dialogue.

Economic Sustainability & Local Development

Diversifying local economies beyond mass tourism

Cultural Routes stimulate diversified economies by linking heritage experiences with local services, reducing reliance on mass tourism and encouraging year-round, higher-value visitor flows across territories.

Opportunities, indicators and fair benefit sharing

Routes create demand for SMEs, crafts, gastronomy and creative sectors; monitor jobs, income and seasonality, ensure fair benefit distribution along urban-rural segments, and foster resilient, low-dependency business models.

Indicator	Description	Example Metric
Employment	Jobs created in tourism-related activities	Number of FTE jobs
Local Income	Earnings retained in local communities	Share of revenue staying local
Seasonality Reduction	Extension of tourism beyond peak months	Off-season nights share (%)
SME Participation	Inclusion of local SMEs and producers	SMEs involved in route network
Geographic Benefit Distribution	Spread of benefits along the entire route	Revenue share in rural areas

Governance & Community Participation

01

Multi-level governance & planning flow

Define vision, map governance levels, engage authorities, design participatory planning with residents and stakeholders, set clear roles, ensure transparency, monitor implementation and adapt collaboratively.



02

Co-creation, alignment & accountability

Co-create products with communities, integrate feedback loops, mediate conflicts, align stakeholder interests, publish decisions, track long-term impacts, report openly, and adjust governance based on shared learning.



Digital Innovation & Smart Solutions on Routes



Digital tools for route interpretation

Showcase apps, AR/VR, and audio guides that enrich route interpretation, offering layered stories, interactive experiences, and tailored content for diverse visitor interests and learning styles.



Data, mapping, and smart visitor management

Explain open data and digital mapping for planning, plus smart systems providing real-time information, capacity alerts, and ticketing to optimize visitor flows and reduce congestion impacts.



Digital storytelling and community co-creation

Show how digital communication platforms amplify local voices, support participatory storytelling, enable co-created content, and strengthen community ownership of cultural narratives along routes.



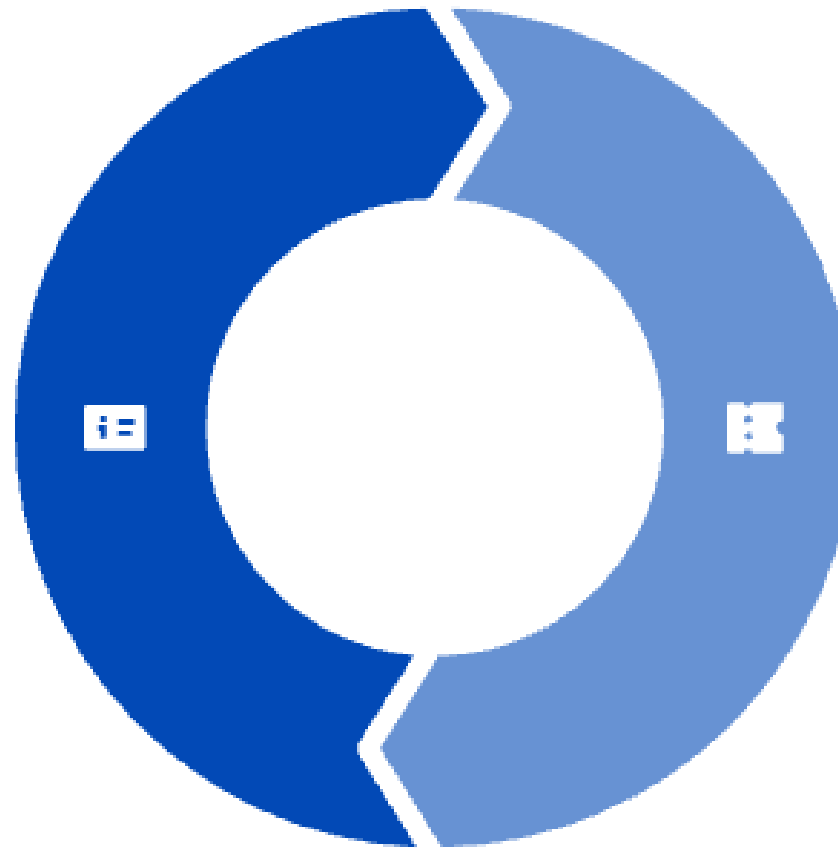
Accessibility and inclusive digital design

Discuss multilingual interfaces, assistive technologies, and inclusive design that improve access for people with disabilities, different language backgrounds, and varied digital literacy levels.

The Network as the Engine of Sustainability

Collaborative cycle driving innovation

Route partners co-create, test, market, learn, improve, and expand shared experiences, continuously refining offers and pooling ideas, resources, products, and know-how across the cultural tourism network.



Risk sharing and sustainable value creation

Networked routes distribute risk, enabling differentiated investments while achieving economic sustainability via shared promotion, cross-selling, joint funding, and social sustainability through shared identity, support, and capacity building.

Route Project & Funding

● Project Setup

Define clear objectives, partner roles, milestones, timelines, and budgets to structure route projects. Use work packages, risk plans, and monitoring indicators to coordinate cultural actors and destinations efficiently.

● Funding Mix

Map potential funding from EU programs, national and regional grants, tourism and culture funds, and private sponsors. Combine small grants, co-funding, and in-kind support to build a robust financial mix for route projects.

● Strategic Fit

Design projects that explicitly deliver on sustainability, inclusion, digitalization, and rural development goals. Link activities and indicators to EU and national strategies to strengthen eligibility and long-term policy relevance.

● Project Types

Develop capacity-building for members, pilot tourism products, and joint promotion campaigns that strengthen networks. Ensure each project builds skills, partnerships, and scalable models rather than only short-term outputs.



Trends, Project Opportunities, and Future Directions



Global Tourism Trends

Thinking	From Mass To Meaningful	Niche Experience Growth	Digital And Responsible Shift
Past	Tourism was dominated by sun and sea mass packages, short stays, price focus, and standardized experiences with limited engagement.	Cultural and pilgrimage tourism existed as small segments, often secondary to leisure beach trips and rarely positioned as core motivations.	Discovery relied on brochures, agencies, and guidebooks, with limited digital reach, weak storytelling, and minimal focus on sustainability.
Now	Travel is shifting toward slower, experiential journeys that seek meaning, reflection, and personal enrichment along cultural routes and regions.	Niche forms such as cultural, spiritual, pilgrimage, creative, and gastronomy tourism are expanding and attracting diverse global audiences.	Digital platforms and social media drive trip inspiration, with travelers seeking authentic, small group, low impact, off path experiences.
Future	Tourists will increasingly favor deep immersion, longer stays, and storytelling-based experiences over quick, generic sightseeing tours.	These niche segments will mature into key strategic pillars, shaping product design, partnerships, and investment along cultural routes.	Environmentally and socially aware travelers will demand transparent stories, measurable impacts, and ethical practices from destinations.

Global trends

- technology technology technology – apps or not – mobile - social
- escape from technology (so that it is at your fingertips)
- personalized travel
- interactivity, involvement, learning: experiencing a destination with a local
- search for authenticity: new destinations
- investment in personal development
- safety as one of the priorities
- Contributing to the change: tourists as ACTIVISTS

Global trends

- **Active and Holistic Wellness:** Wellness travel has evolved past traditional spas to include multi-day hikes, science-backed longevity therapies, and active escapes like village cycling.
- **Tech-Enabled Personalization:** AI agents, chatbots, and biometric technologies are standardizing the trip-planning process, providing seamless, hyper-tailored in-destination experiences.
- **"Anti-Tourism" and the Hidden Season:** Driven by overtourism in major European and North American hubs, travelers are increasingly visiting secondary cities, off-season windows, and milder climates to avoid peak crowds.
- **Emerging Markets:** Major tourism hubs are experiencing a shift as travelers seek less saturated, culturally rich destinations.

Co-work with your visitors
Educate visitors
Co-create with your network



Experience + Authenticity

= emotion

= memory

= personal experience

Repeat “purchase” / invest in the system

PEOPLE – MOTIVATION – NETWORK - COOPERATION – GROWTH



Key Strategies and Best Practices

- **Community-Led Tourism:** Engage local residents in destination management and decision-making to ensure tourism benefits the community rather than exploiting it. Ensure revenues stay in the local economy through locally owned accommodations, guides, and businesses.
- **Authentic Storytelling:** Avoid the commercialization or "theme-parking" of local traditions. Prioritize educational, immersive experiences led by local experts and traditional artisans.
- **Visitor Management:** Implement timed entry, capacity limits, and smart tourism routing to protect vulnerable heritage sites from overtourism.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** Adopt circular economy practices, such as reducing waste, minimizing plastic, and promoting green transportation options.
- **Cross-Cultural Respect:** Educate visitors on sustainable travel behaviors that respect religious, social, and historical norms to avoid cultural arrogance.

Sustainable Cultural Travel

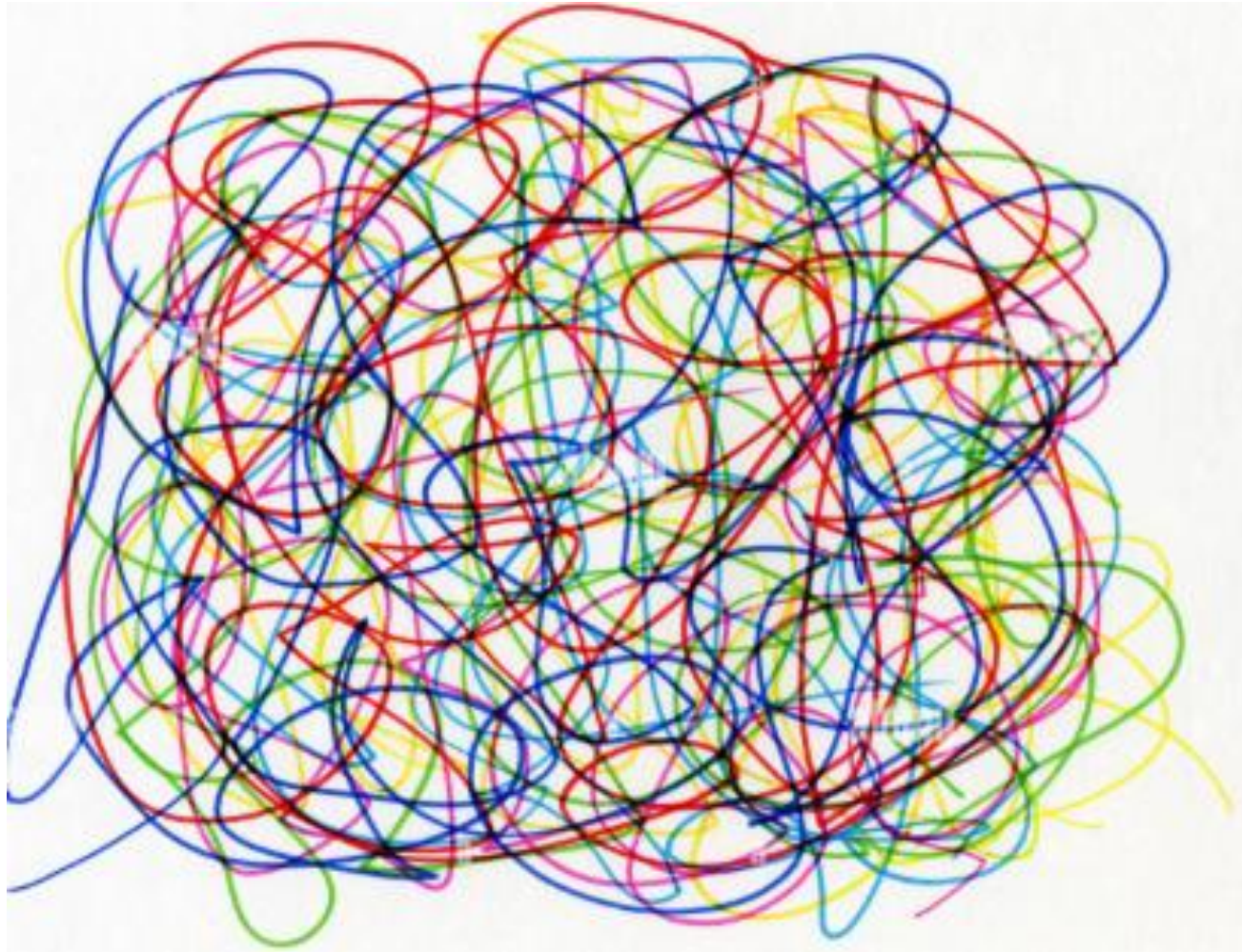
KEY MESSAGES

Promote slow, authentic, respectful, community-based travel experiences that value local heritage, support resident livelihoods, reduce pressure on fragile sites, and encourage longer, deeper stays by culturally engaged visitors.

PROMOTION AND IMPACT

Use low-cost tools like the route website, shared social media and storytelling to reach niche operators and bloggers, track visits, seasonality and satisfaction, and focus on quality visitors with responsible behavior.





Each scribble is a different story.
Stories need to be told to be alive.

Each story is interconnected network that connects people and places, creating values, identities.... experiences & emotions!

Expanding traveler's awareness, generating new values and understanding the differences and similarities..

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!



SUSTAINABLE AND **BALANCED** TOURISM **MANAGEMENT**

BUILDING NETWORKS THAT **WORK**

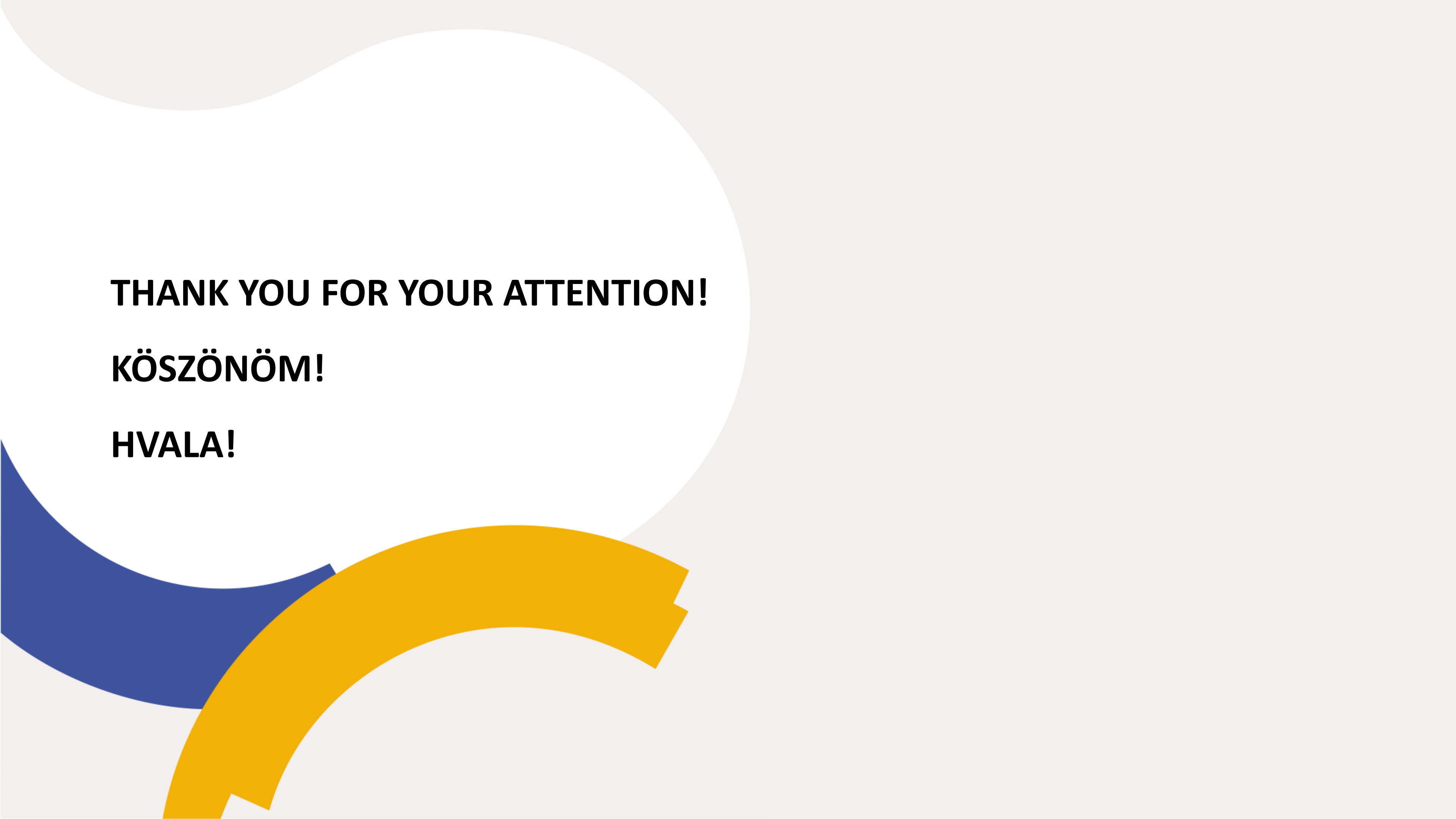
PROJECTS

Promoting and Supporting Collective Sustainability Actions

= management that works = balanced tourism

NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK! NETWORK!





THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

KÖSZÖNÖM!

HVALA!